

Suggested steps in identifying and completing solar electric or photovoltaic (PV) projects.

1. Identify all municipal owned properties both buildings and land.
2. Assess using maps and site visits- the solar potential including shade free southern exposure and are for PV. For buildings- a southern facing roof area that is or could be shade free from at least 9am-3pm. For land- a relatively flat or south facing slope, define shade free including w/ tree removal available to install PV.
3. Evaluate the potential sites for prioritization.
 - a. For buildings, prioritize if- the electric panel is at least 200 Amps and has open breakers; the shingled roof is less than 5 years old or the roof is ready to be replaced or is a metal roof.
 - b. For land- prioritize if it has over an acre of area available for PV or is adjacent to a town building. Proximity to three phase power lines is needed for PVs larger than 100kW. Be aware that wetlands or flood zones are inappropriate.
 - c. Consider aesthetic impact particularly on historic buildings and on land that the PV would be easily visible on. This can be a source of community opposition (see #4). Screening w/ shrubs or an earthen berm may alleviate some site lines of concern.
 - d. It may be appropriate to get professional input to prioritize sites and /or include multiple sites in a request for proposals (RFP).
4. Get the buy in, as much as possible, from abutters, neighbors and your fellow citizens to avoid a significant not in my back yard type challenge. Should there be opponents, attempt to educate and if possible avoid them being able to defeat the project.
5. CENH is available to support researching funding options, drafting warrant articles and public meetings.
6. Develop an RFP and a list of potential contractors (templates are available from CENH).
7. Distribute RFP, review and select a winning bidder to submit to the responsible governing authority- Selectboard or administrator to issue an award and sign a contract.
8. Oversee the project to ensure that all terms and conditions are met.
9. Monitor the project after one year to ensure it is meeting expectations. Note variations in weather patterns may have an impact on output.
10. Share the results including financial and emissions savings.